

National Collaborative on Faith and Disability Webinar Series

## Honoring Spiritual Needs and Gifts:

**From Inertia to Collaborative Action by Providers and Congregations**  
**March 30, 2015**

A webinar series hosted by:

National Collaborative on Faith and Disability ([faithanddisability.org](http://faithanddisability.org))

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## Congregational Strategies for Reaching Out to Agencies:

Honoring Spiritual Supports and Enabling Inclusion and Ongoing Participation

Moderator:

**Shelly Christensen** (*Inclusion Innovations, LLC*)

Presenters:

**Karen Jackson** (*Faith Inclusion Network*)

**Cindy Merten** (*Presbyterians for Disability Concerns*)

**Mary O'Meara** (*Archdiocese of Washington*)

**Peg Kolm** (*Archdiocese of Washington*)

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### Also Supported By:

- Autism Society of America
- AAIDD Religion & Spirituality Division
- Parent to Parent
- Bethesda Institute
- The Arc
- Association of University Centers on Disability
- ANCOR
- TASH
- Vanderbilt Kennedy University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities

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### A Few Important Notes

- This webinar is being recorded and will be posted this week on the Collaborative on Faith and Disability website ([faithanddisability.org](http://faithanddisability.org)).
- All slides and resources will be posted along with the webinar recording.
- Questions can be submitted in the question box for discussion after the presentations.
- We will read posted questions to the presenters during the Q&A at the end of the presentation. All phone lines are silenced.
- Our time is brief. Presenters will share contact information for follow-up.
- Information about upcoming webinars and the Collaborative on Faith and Disability will be shared at the end of the webinar.

## INTRODUCTION TO THE TOPIC

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**Shelly Christensen, M.A. (Moderator)**

*Executive Director and Founder*  
Inclusion Innovations, LLC  
Website: [inclusioninnovations.com](http://inclusioninnovations.com)  
Email: [shelly@inclusioninnovations.com](mailto:shelly@inclusioninnovations.com)

## CONNECTING WITH THE COMMUNITY

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**Karen Jackson, M.A.**

*Founder and Director*  
Faith Inclusion Network of Hampton Roads  
Website: [faithinclusionnetwork.org](http://faithinclusionnetwork.org)  
Email: [faithinclusionnetwork@gmail.com](mailto:faithinclusionnetwork@gmail.com)

### Strategy #1

Find and develop connections that already exist in your congregation.



### Strategy #2

Invite agencies or organizations to utilize your faith community's building for their meetings and events.



### Strategy #3

Invite representatives from agencies or service providers to give a presentation to members of your congregation.



### Strategies #4 and #5

Host a disability service fair or join other faith communities to host a fair or event.



### Strategy #6

Develop your relationships with agency POC's who participated in your event.



### Strategy #7

Provide employment opportunities for individuals who have disabilities and may need a supported work environment.



### Strategy # 8

Develop a network.



### Strategy # 8

An interfaith network creates a way to connect congregations with disability related services, businesses and organizations in the community.



### How this works-Example #1

Agencies reach out to FIN to find appropriate faith community for client.



### How this works-Example #2

FIN connects faith communities with meaningful outreach opportunities in the community.



### How this works-Example #3

FIN provides support by way of encouragement, resources and connections for pastors, religious education directors and others in faith communities.



### How this works-Example #4

FIN provides a website, [www.faithinclusionnetwork.org](http://www.faithinclusionnetwork.org) and hosts events to bring together people from all different parts of the community.



### CONGREGATIONAL STRATEGIES FOR WORKING WITH AGENCIES TO PROVIDE SPIRITUAL SUPPORT

**Cindy Merten, M.A.**

*Director of Christian Education & All Abilities Inclusion Ministries  
First Presbyterian Church Birmingham  
Co-Moderator of Presbyterians for Disability Concerns  
Website: [Everybodyschurch.org](http://Everybodyschurch.org), [presbyterianmission.org](http://presbyterianmission.org)  
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#### Congregational strategies for reaching out to agencies

1. Identify area agencies: ARC, service providers, homes for adults with disabilities.
2. Communicate by email, letter, and phone to introduce yourself and state your mission and vision.
3. Survey them regarding spiritual practices, worship attendance, other involvement in faith communities.
4. Advertise in their newsletters and emails.
5. Host a conference on disability inclusion in faith communities and invite agencies, churches, synagogues, mosques, school staff and others.
6. Create a culture of inclusion in your own faith community and make sure your members are well informed.  
<http://www.fpcbirmingham.org/inclusion-videos.html>



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- Meet face-to-face with Development Director, Program Directors and others.
- Arrange to visit group homes.
- Discover the interests of those you are inviting.
- Build and deepen relationships by learning how you can support their mission.
  - Examples: Collect food and non-perishable items for residential homes, host social events such as an ice cream social, Snow Ball dance, movie or game night, attend sporting events, talent shows, visit homes and take an activity that residents enjoy, invite them to your homes.
  - Provide spiritual care in group homes on a regular basis.



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### Dealing with Issues that Arise

- Transportation: People who are semi-dependent need transportation
- Communication between an agency and its homes
  - Caregiver changes and shift changes can interfere with continuity of care and relationships with the faith community.
- Interpersonal relationships: Collaborate with staff to problem solve and provide emotional and spiritual support.
  - Behavioral issues, a death of a parent, communication
- We are not therapists but can support current therapy practices as instructed.
- Need to provide enough volunteers to maintain the structure and schedule.
  - This needs to be more than a niche ministry.

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### Partnering with Agency Staff

- Send regular correspondence or newsletter by email.
- Meet them at the door and assist in bringing their clients in and out of the building.
- Learn the names of staff.
- Include staff in worship leadership and full participation.
- Model hand over hand participation i.e. playing a musical instrument or signing a simple phrase in worship.
- Sharing a meal strengthens community.
- Provide receipts for caregivers and residents who need them for reimbursement.



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### Strategies to enable inclusion & participation

- Make "Welcome" visible – mount an inclusion statement on the wall, use nametags for all, give personal welcome using names and greet with warmth.
- Share leadership with everyone.
  - Many participate in a dramatic re-enactment of the scripture, sometimes the whole congregation. Others meet and greet, light a candle, pass out musical instruments, one of the women from a group home serves as a sighted guide for another worship leader. At each service three people help in a ritual we call "Setting the Table of Community."
- Honor, value and affirm everyone's gifts.
- Include agencies in ongoing planning.
- Support caregivers when they need help.

As Everybody's Church,  
we commit ourselves  
to serving Christ  
by cultivating  
mission, inclusion and community



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## Resources

- Creating a Culture of Inclusion: a video study resource to guide conversations about including people of all abilities in the life of a faith community. [www.fcbbirmingham.org/inclusion-videos.html](http://www.fcbbirmingham.org/inclusion-videos.html).
- FPCB mission statement: As Everybody's Church we commit ourselves to serve Christ by cultivating mission, inclusion and community.
- Rejoicing Spirits is an innovative ministry that works to enrich the faith lives of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, their families and friends and other supportive community members. [www.rejoicingspirits.org](http://www.rejoicingspirits.org)
- Resources, support and coaching to help congregations include people with disabilities as active and valued members. Congregations partner with people with disabilities and their support systems to explore faith using the Rejoicing Spirits ministry model.
- A short video of a Rejoicing Spirits worship service is also available at [www.fcbbirmingham.org/inclusion-videos.html](http://www.fcbbirmingham.org/inclusion-videos.html).
- [Including People with Disabilities in Faith Communities](#) by Erik Carter
- Presbyterians for Disability Concerns welcomes those who affirm, support and advocate for the gifts, rights and responsibilities of persons with disabilities in the total life of the church. Resource packets to help congregations become authentic circles of inclusion are written each year. [www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/phewa/presbyterians-disability-concerns/](http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/phewa/presbyterians-disability-concerns/)

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## STRATEGIES FOR WORKING WITH AGENCIES TO PROVIDE SPIRITUAL SUPPORT

### Mary O'Meara

*Executive Board Member, International Catholic Foundation for the Service of Deaf Persons*

*Executive Director, Department of Special Needs Ministries, Archdiocese of Washington*

Website: [icdeafservice.org](http://icdeafservice.org), [adw.org/specialneeds](http://adw.org/specialneeds)

Email: [omearam@adw.org](mailto:omearam@adw.org)

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## Community Resource Model

- Our Community Resource Models promote the full inclusion into community life of teens and adults with developmental differences by providing over 30 therapeutic recreational, social, educational, and respite care programs.
- Dynamic, innovative programs are designed to encourage our members' personal growth, friendships, and healthy lifestyles, and to provide support to their family members and caregivers.
- Program leaders are experienced professionals and our staff is dedicated to making sure each member experiences success. Some programs are drop-in, others are several sessions and some run for consecutive months. Some activities are perfect for anyone; others require a particular interest or skill.



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## Pioneer Program



- Potomac Community Resources <http://pcr-inc.org/>
- Began with families at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish seeking access for their loved ones.
- PCR is now a private, nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization.
- By request of Cardinal Wuerl, PCR, partnering with the Archdiocese of Washington and Catholic Charities, have been tasked with replicating the PCR model across Washington and the five Maryland counties of the Archdiocese of Washington.

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### We are growing!

- Southern Maryland Community Resources
  - [www.somdc.org](http://www.somdc.org)
- Up County Community Resources
  - <http://ucresources.org/>
- Brookland Community Resources
  - <http://brooklandcr.org/index.php>
- Prince Georges Community Resources
  - COMING SOON



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### Program Examples

- Tricia Sullivan Respite Care I & II
- Communication Counts (speech & communication skills)
- Chorus
- Men's Discussion Groups
- Women's Discussion Group
- NoteAbles (music therapy & enjoyment)
- Movin' Along (exercise and movement)
- Rhythmic Movement (wheelchair dance)
- M&T Bank Basketball
- Yoga Ventures
- A.C.E (Aerobic & Core)
- Wednesday Art
- Phabulous Photographers
- Studio 3F (monthly social club)
- Special Events: Beach Party, Inclusive Earth Day, Summer Barbecue, Halloween Party, Holiday Party, Garden Club
- Transition Times (monthly informational group for families and professionals of transitioning youth)
- Graduate Transition Program at Montgomery College



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### For more information

- Steve Riley- Executive Director, Potomac Community Resources, Inc.
  - [sriley@pcr-inc.org](mailto:sriley@pcr-inc.org)
- Mary O'Meara- Executive Director, Archdiocese of Washington Department of Special Needs Ministries
  - [omearam@adw.org](mailto:omearam@adw.org)



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## STRATEGIES FOR WORKING WITH AGENCIES TO PROVIDE SPIRITUAL SUPPORT

**Peg Kolm**

*Coordinator of the Office of Persons with Disabilities  
 Department of Special Needs Ministries, Archdiocese of Washington  
 Website: [adw.org/specialneeds](http://adw.org/specialneeds)  
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### How and Why This Works!

- Shared values
- Public square definition
- Christian informed perspective
- Relate faith in public conversations
- Broaden and deepen productive relationships

### The “Bridge” Effect

- Board membership invitations
- Collaboration on public policy issues
- Partners are hospitals, special educators, housing agencies, state/local advocacy groups, agencies, local government offices

### Benefits to Public Partners

- Access to
- community members in parishes
  - language supports (ASL, Spanish)
  - events (conferences, talks, etc.)
  - financial support & advocacy

### Benefits to Faith Partners

- Place at the Table—opportunity to be in the public square and relate faith perspective
- Hope Restored--a way forward for families
- Enriched Engagement of Clergy, Congregation

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Success Stories from the Field...

Upper Room PTSD Ministry +  
Veterans Advisory Committee

=

1. Vet to Vet Speaker Series
2. Local Veterans Owned Business
3. Interfaith Collaboration

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Our Next Collaboration...



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Contact me...

- Peg Kolm
- Archdiocese of Washington
- Department of Special Needs Ministries
- [mkolm@adw.org](mailto:mkolm@adw.org)
- 240.994.0603
- [specialneedsministry@adw.org](mailto:specialneedsministry@adw.org)

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Q&A WITH THE SPEAKERS

Please post your questions in the question box

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# NATIONAL COLLABORATIVE ON FAITH AND DISABILITY

[www.faihanddisability.org](http://www.faihanddisability.org)

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## Vision and Mission

People with disabilities and their families will have compelling opportunities and supports to develop and express their spirituality, engage in congregational life, and share their gifts and talents in ways that are personally valued and that strengthen communities.

Our mission is to support people with disabilities, their families, and those who support them by providing national and international leadership in the areas of research, education, service, and dissemination related to disability, religion, and inclusive supports.

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### Current UCEDD Partners

THE ELIZABETH M. BOGGS CENTER ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES  
 ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON MEDICAL SCHOOL  
 VANDERBILT KENNEDY CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE IN DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES  
 Georgia State University  
 CENTER FOR LEADERSHIP IN DISABILITY  
 Department of Disability and Human Development  
 COLLEGE OF APPLIED HEALTH SCIENCES  
 UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY  
 Human Development Institute  
 University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities  
 Partnership for People with Disabilities  
 OREGON HEALTH & SCIENCE UNIVERSITY  
 Institute on Community Integration  
 UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA  
 UCEDD  
 University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities  
 JFK Partners  
 Promoting Families, Health and Development  
 Institute for Human Development  
 A University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD)  
 UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA  
 CENTER for COMMUNITY INCLUSION & DISABILITY STUDIES  
 University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities  
 TEXAS CENTER for DISABILITY STUDIES

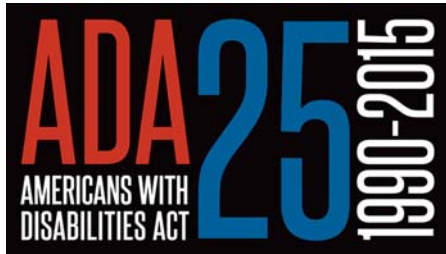
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### Activities of the Collaborative

- ✓ Develop and support an interdisciplinary and interfaith network of scholars and leaders who are addressing the intersection of disability, religion, and/or spirituality in their work.
- ✓ Foster rigorous, collaborative, and interdisciplinary scholarship, including research, policy analyses, theological reflection, and program evaluations.
- ✓ Develop educational materials, programs, and technical assistance fostering collaboration among, or building the capacity of, religious leaders, human service professionals, service providers, congregations, individuals with disabilities, and families to address spirituality and build inclusive spiritual supports.
- ✓ Produce and disseminate compelling resources based on research and state-of-the-art practice in both disability services and inclusive spiritual supports.
- ✓ Provide national and international leadership by speaking to policy initiatives, cultural developments, and other emerging issues related to disabilities, religion, and spirituality.
- ✓ Serve as a central and visible "clearinghouse" for resources, research, trainings, conferences, programs, and organizations.
- ✓ Provide an accessible and engaging link between academic, professional, and lay communities.
- ✓ Support and enhance the efforts of other organizations, faith networks, and groups carrying out work in related areas.
- ✓ Pursue large-scale funding to carry out the work of the Collaborative.

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### ADA 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary



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### Upcoming Webinar Conversations

- **April 27:** *Strategies for congregations to use in building awareness and commitment within congregations*
- **June 29:** *Best practices and resources for moving from inclusion to belonging as contributing, valued members of faith communities*
- Register at [www.faithanddisability.org](http://www.faithanddisability.org)