

Suggested web and print resources

- hopecentreministries.org – The mission of Hope Centre in Winnipeg, Manitoba, is to build “inclusive worshiping communities that see all people as created in God’s image, gifted and capable of making a contribution.” The centre’s executive director is Shellie Power.
- www.crcna.org/disability – Christian Reformed Disability Concerns (DC). Find resources for worship, caring, accessibility, mental health ministry, and much more.
- network.crcna.org/disability – Many more resources for ministry with people with disabilities include a blog from CRC DC Director Mark Stephenson.
- www.rca.org/disability – Reformed Church in America Disability Concerns. Many similar resources to the CRC DC website. Don’t miss “Spirituality and Hospitality: What the Church Can Learn by Welcoming Persons with Disabilities,” produced by the RCA Commission on Theology to explore “the theological and spiritual issues at stake in the church's response to persons with disabilities.”
- www.friendship.org – Friendship Ministries is a not-for-profit organization that exists to help churches and organizations around the world share God’s love with people who have intellectual disability. Their mission is to share God’s love with people who have intellectual disability and to enable them to become an active part of God’s family.
- [Other suggested resources](#) – Disability Concerns has assembled an eclectic list of additional resources including disability-specific organizations, assessment tools, statistics, and tools for making churches more accessible.

Including People with Disabilities in Faith Communities by Erik W. Carter

A congregational community is an ideal place to share and strengthen faith, form lasting relationships, and develop special gifts and talents. Too often, though, people with developmental and other disabilities lack the opportunities and supports to fully participate in the life of their faith community. That’s why families and service providers need to read this ground-breaking guidebook; and share a copy with congregations that want to become places of welcome and belonging for people with disabilities.

Bringing his practical ideas to life with anecdotes, quotes, and examples of successful strategies, Erik Carter helps readers

- reflect on how welcoming their congregation could be for people with disabilities and their families
- articulate and pursue a bold vision of inclusion throughout their congregation, community, city, or state

- take steps to break down attitudinal, architectural, programmatic, and other barriers to inclusion design appropriate, inclusive religious education programs for children, youth, and adults
- learn how service providers can actively support the spiritual preferences, strengths, and needs of people with disabilities

To make inclusion work in any faith community, this how-to book gives readers workable strategies and photocopyable forms for identifying "indicators of welcome," encouraging community outreach, and gathering important information about the support needs of people with disabilities and their families.

Autism and Your Church- Barbara J. Newman there is also a Training DVD corresponds to this book Autism and Your Church offers practical ways to welcome and include individuals with ASD into the full life of your congregation. This resource will enable church leaders to:

- appreciate those with ASD as persons created in God's image.
- learn about six common areas of difference in individuals with ASD.
- discover ten strategies for including people with ASD in the life of your church.
- develop an action plan for ongoing ministry with children and adults who have ASD.

Helping Kids Include Kids with Disabilities by Barbara J. Newman

Children with disabilities are part of God's family, but people don't always treat them that way. In this book you'll discover how to help kids and their leaders welcome and include kids with disabilities at church or school. This revised edition of Helping Kids Include Kids with Disabilities contains a wealth of helpful information for understanding disabilities such as

- autism spectrum disorder
- attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder
- behavioral Challenges
- hearing, visual, and speech/language impairments
- intellectual disabilities
- physical disabilities
- learning disabilities

- severe or multiple disabilities

This book also include guidelines and forms to help churches identify and meet needs, lesson plans for presenting information on each area of disability, fact sheers about specific disabilities to share with adult leaders, and much more. It's an indispensable resource of teachers, Sunday School leaders, church staff, and anyone who works with children.

Everybody belongs... everybody serves.....Inclusion Handbook (From Christian Reformed and Reformed Church in America Disabilities Concerns ministries): *Knowing the particular disability a person lives with will help churches better to understand and help that person, but people are individuals with complex needs, gifts, joys, challenges, and interests. As advocates for people with disabilities, we must encourage our churches to focus on people and relationships, and not to be overly concerned with labels. This handbook emphasizes the importance of developing relationships and encouraging everyone in your congregation to use their gifts for God's glory.*

This is a great quick reference book with many practical applications.

Vulnerable Communion: A Theology of Disability and Hospitality Thomas E. Reynolds

-- As parents of a son with disabilities, Thomas Reynolds and his wife know what it's like to be misunderstood by a church community. In Vulnerable Communion, Reynolds draws upon that personal experience and a diverse body of literature to empower churches and individuals to foster deeper hospitality toward persons with disabilities.

Reynolds shows that the Christian story is one of strength coming from weakness, of wholeness emerging from brokenness, and of power in vulnerability. Wholeness, he argues, comes not from self-sufficiency, but from the "genuinely inclusive communion" that results from sharing our humanity--including our lack of ability--with one another. Then, and only then, will we truly live in hospitality with one another and with people with disabilities.

Reynolds offers valuable biblical, theological, and pastoral tools to understand and welcome those with disabilities. The book will be useful to academics, students, and pastors, as well as anyone touched by disability in some way. Readers will find penetrating examinations of the difficult questions of why God allows disability and what the church can learn from people with disabilities.

Special Needs, Special Ministry, Group Publishing

This is a practical, step-by step guide that helps those involved with Children's Ministry to think about strategies and purpose. This book is filled with ideas to help:

- Learn from other churches (and their mistakes!) who are involved in special needs programs.
- Build awareness within your church
- Develop a special needs ministry

Special Needs Smart Pages: Joni and Friends

This is a great resource filled with hundreds of practical tips and ideas. It comes complete with ready to print resources and includes:

- Small group Bible studies for disability awareness
- Planning guidelines
- Disability specific information