



Beginning and Strengthening Inclusive Ministries and Congregations

- Start with the book *That All May Worship* and the Journey of a Congregation and their Accessible Congregations Campaign. www.nod.org. Another excellent new book for congregations, agencies, and families is from Brookes Publishing, Erik Carter's book entitled *Including People with Disabilities in Faith Communities: A Guide for Providers, Families, and Congregations*.
- Start one person and one family at a time. Take time to listen deeply to their stories. Ministry in this area impacts many dimensions of individual lives and the lives of congregations.
- Find out what your denomination is already doing and connect with others who are involved.
- Use Dimensions of Faith, the online resource guide, for specific resources, http://rwjms.umdj.edu/boggscenter/products/prod_info.htm. That also includes lots of videos useful for congregations.

If Christian, subscribe to two free ecumenical newsletters:

- *Extras*..the newsletter of Friendship Ministries. Free. www.friendship.org
- *Breakthrough*. From Bethesda Lutheran Homes and Services, Inc. Also free. www.blhs.org

Interfaith:

- The newsletter of the Religion and Spirituality Division of the AAIDD. *The Religion and Spirituality Division Quarterly*. People are encouraged to join AAIDD, but congregational members who are not full time in ministries with people with disabilities can subscribe for \$25 for three years. Go to www.aaidreligion.org.

Videos

There are several that are excellent for congregations and agencies. See a long listing in Dimensions of Faith. (above). They include *The Ten Commandments for Communicating with People with Disabilities* (Program Development Associates), *Believing, Belonging, Becoming* (Order from Bill Gaventa, below), *Bridges to Faith* (program in Massachusetts that recruits "faith companions" to help adults participate in faith communities, and *Surprising Grace: The Church and People with Disabilities*. (Presbyterian). Also see *Praying with Lior*, by ordering from www.prayingwithlior.com.

Books and Resources. There are a number of excellent new books on theology and disability, ministries, religious education, and more. See Dimensions of Faith, online, above.

In New Jersey, join: The New Jersey Coalition for Inclusive Ministries:

To join the listserv, send an email to NJCIM-online-subscribe@yahoogroups.com .

In Pennsylvania, join: the listserv for The Pennsylvania Faith Community Leadership Project in Inclusive Ministries supported by The Pennsylvania Developmental Disabilities Council. Send an email with your email to ongel@umdj.edu.

For more information, contact Bill Gaventa, Director, Community and Congregational Supports, The Elizabeth M. Boggs Center on Developmental Disabilities, and Editor, Journal of Religion, Disability, and Health. Email: bill.gaventa@umdj.edu or 732-235-9204.

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