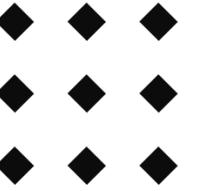


TAKING THE NEXT STEP: WALKING FORWARD IN FAITH

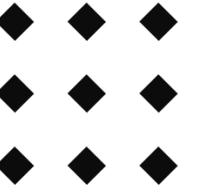
Masterpiece Alliance
Lauren Hickman

laurenhickmantn@gmail.com



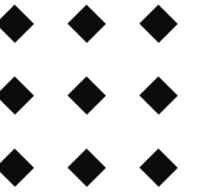


WHICH SHOE ARE STEPPING IN?



WHO DO YOU KNOW?

Gift Card



HOW ARE YOU WELCOMING THEM?

Gift Card

REMOVING BARRIERS

MARK 2:1-4, 12

1 And again he entered into Capernaum after some days; and it was noised that he was in the house.

2 And straightway many were gathered together, insomuch that there was no room to receive them, no, not so much as about the door: and he preached the word unto them.

3 And they come unto him, bringing one sick of the palsy, which was borne of four.

4 And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay.

5 When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee.

12 And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion.



“Many of our churches have forbidden children with special needs from coming face to face with Jesus Christ. Not that churches are **actively restraining** special needs children from coming to church but rather churches are hindering these children from coming because of **inaction**.” Joni Erikson Tada

NEXT STEPS TO REMOVE BARRIERS



Why?



Removing Barriers is Christ - Like

- Matthew 20:29-34
- Matthew 25:40

Aren't We Busy Enough?



Removing Barriers is Necessary

- I Corinthians 12:18-22
- Romans 12:12-14



Removing Barriers is Essential

- Galatians 6:10

REMOVING BARRIERS IS CHRIST – LIKE

Matthew 20:29-34

29 And as they departed from Jericho, a great multitude followed him.

30 And, behold, two blind men sitting by the way side, when they heard that Jesus passed by, cried out, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son of David.

31 And the multitude rebuked them, because they should hold their peace: but they cried the more, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son of David.

32 And Jesus stood still, and called them, and said, What will ye that I shall do unto you?

33 They say unto him, Lord, that our eyes may be opened.

34 So Jesus had compassion on them, and touched their eyes: and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed him.





REMOVING BARRIERS IS NECESSARY

I Corinthians 12:18-22

8 But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.

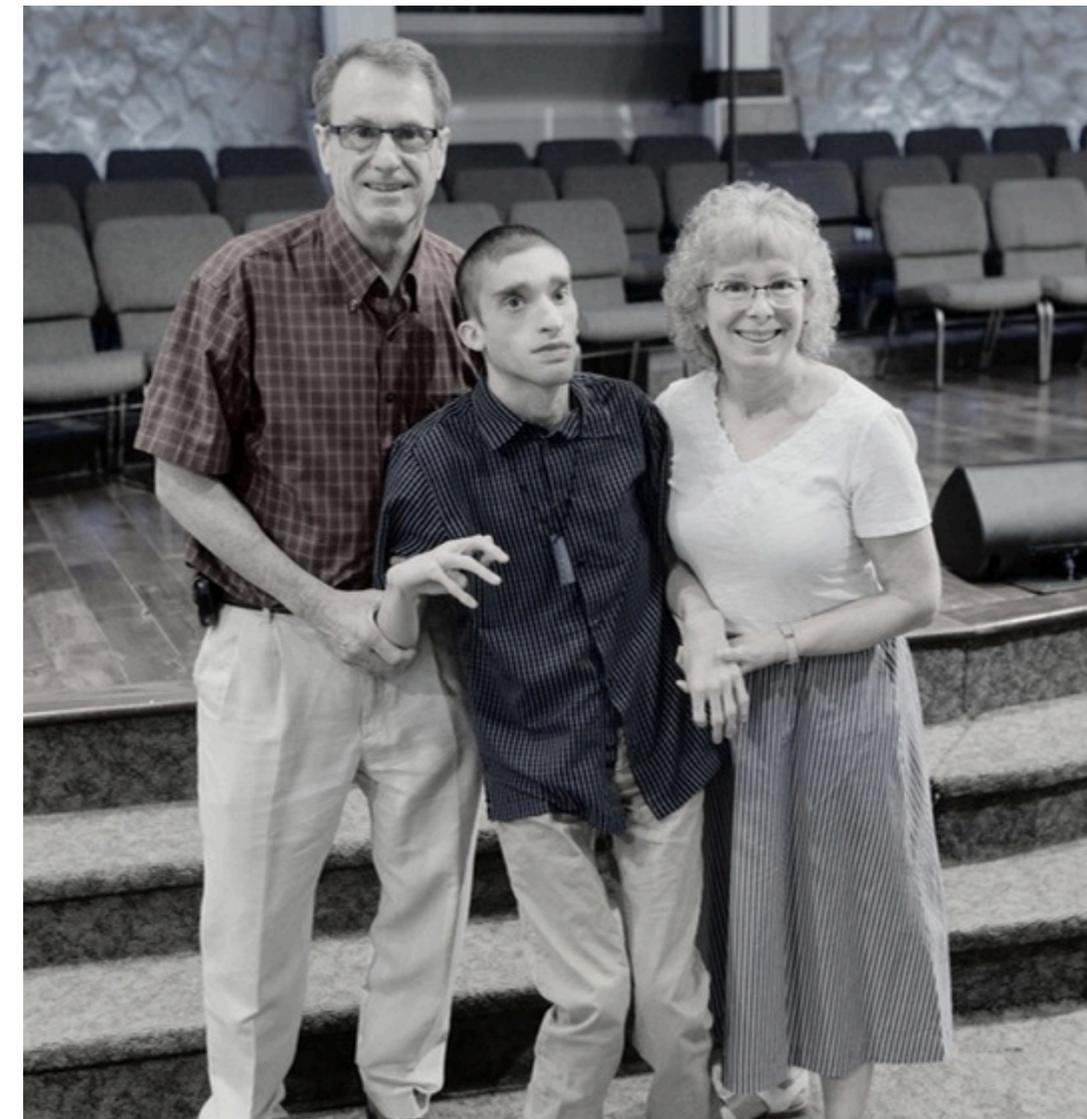
19 And if they were all one member, where were the body?

20 But now are they many members, yet but one body.

21 And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.

22 Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, **are necessary**

NECESSARY

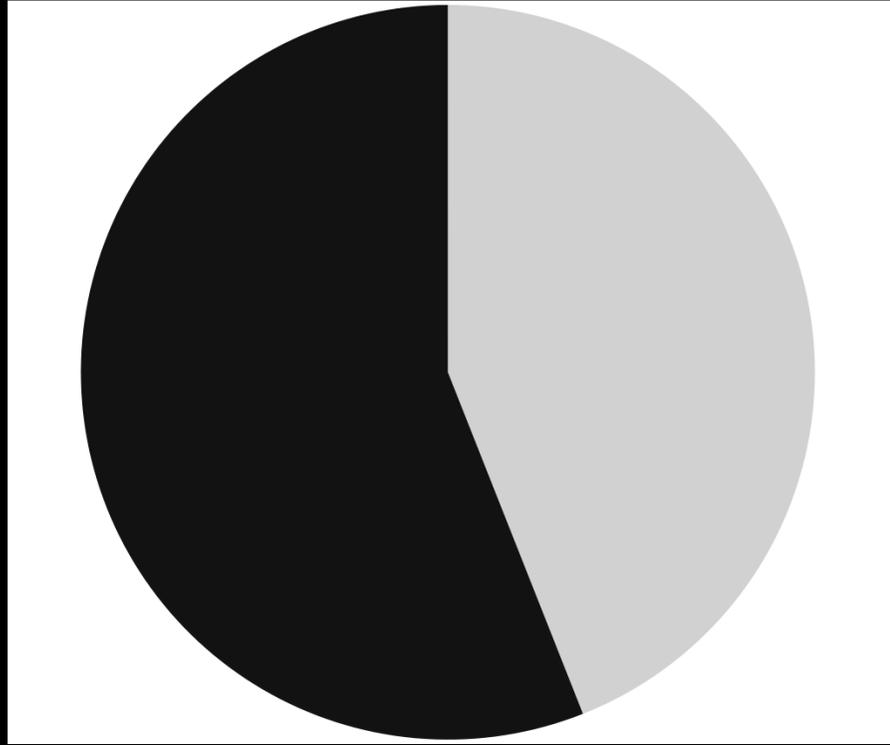
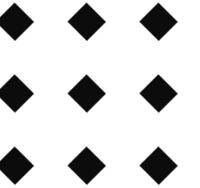


REMOVING BARRIERS IS ESSENTIAL

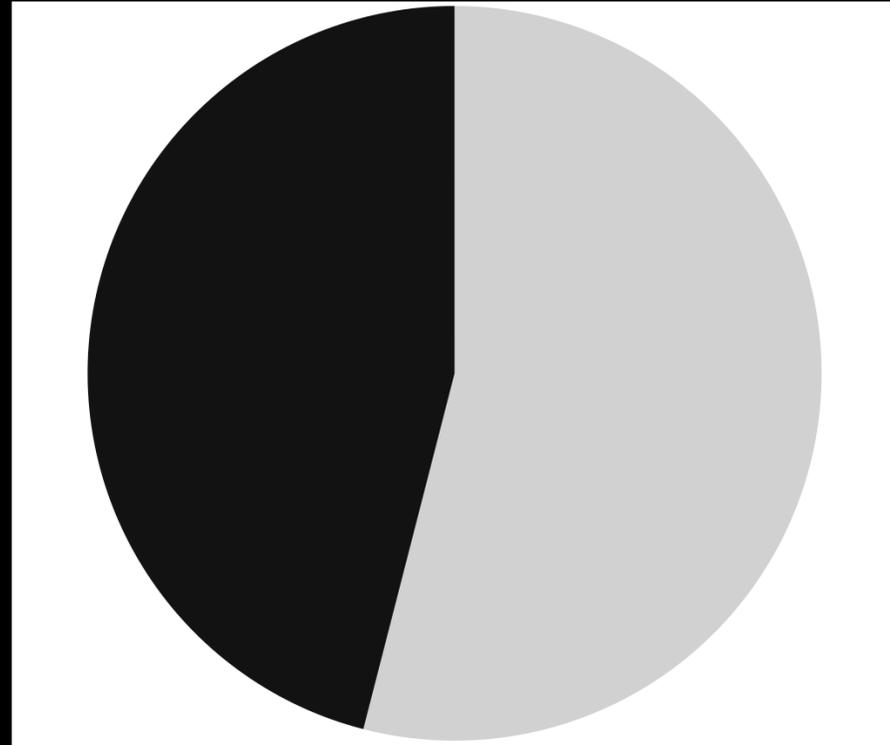
Galatians 6:10

As we have therefore
opportunity, let us do good unto
all men, especially unto them
who are of the household of faith.





56% of families kept their child from religious activities due to lack of support.*



46% of families have never been asked by a faith leader about how to include their child with disability.*

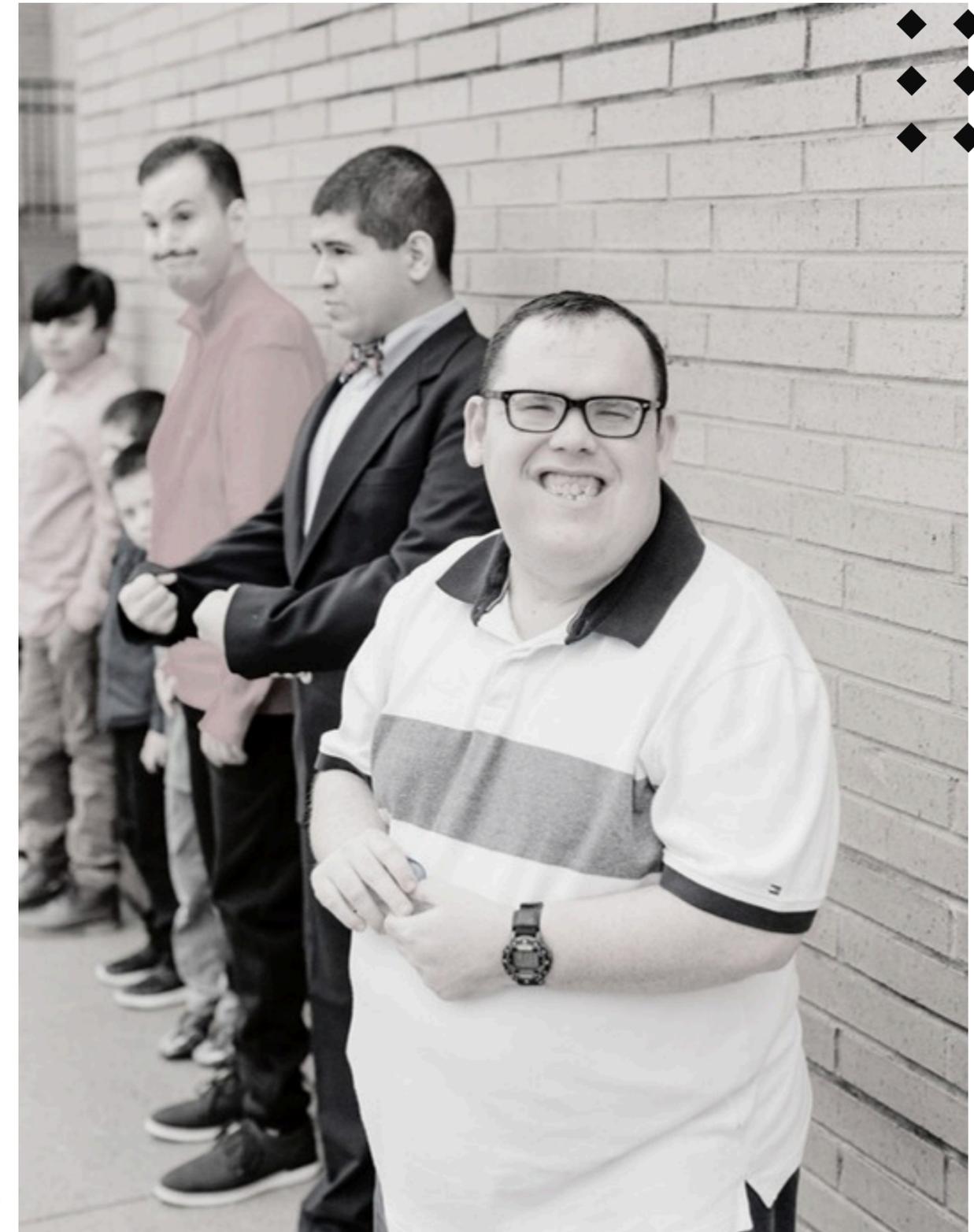
*Ault, M. J. Congregational Participation and Supports for Children and Adults With Disabilities. 2013.

*Ault, M. J. Congregational Participation and Supports for Children and Adults With Disabilities. 2013.

17% of children ages 3-17 have one or more developmental disabilities*

As a result, children with special needs are now one of the largest unengaged people groups.

We do not have the option of what people groups we can minister to and which groups we can ignore.



*CDC - Center for Disease Control and Prevention
<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/let-no-special-need-hinder-the-spread-of-the-gospel/>

How to Remove Barriers

1

COMMUNICATE WITH GOD

LABORERS
LOCATIONS
LEADERSHIP *
FAMILIES

2

CONNECT WITH OTHERS

JONI AND FRIENDS
KEY MINISTRY *
SHEPHERDS COLLEGE *
MASTERPIECE ALLIANCE

3

CREATE OPPERTUNITIES

CONVERSATIONS
BUDDY BAGS
CLASSROOM
MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

Communicate with God

LABORERS
LOCATIONS
LEADERSHIP *
FAMILIES

Leadership

1

Leadership

- Communicate to church staff and church leadership

2

Volunteer

- Train, encourage, and schedule volunteers

3

Family

- Build relationships with the families

Connect with Others

JONI AND FRIENDS

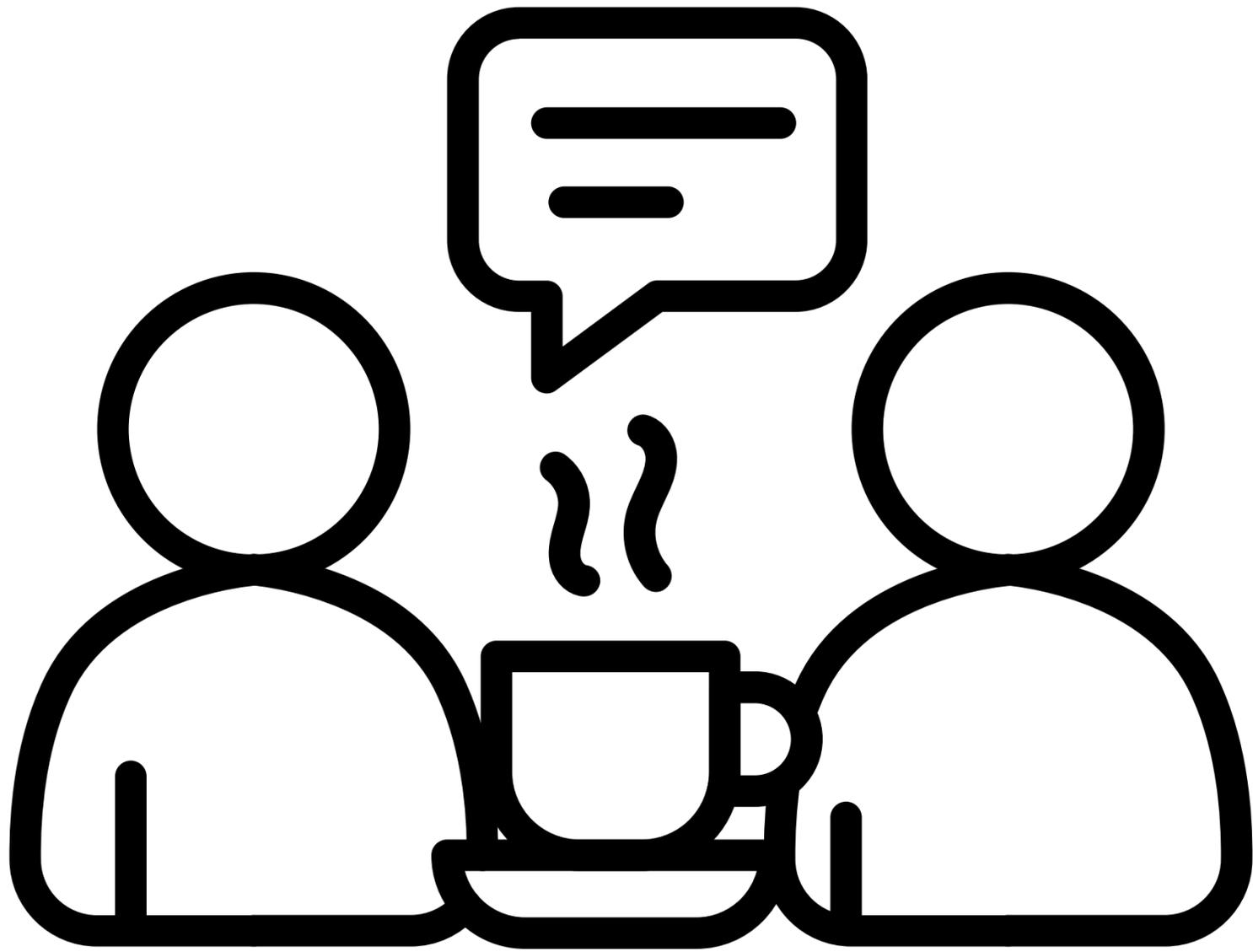
KEY MINISTRY *

SHEPHERDS COLLEGE *

MASTERPIECE ALLIANCE

OTHER RESOURCES

Create
Opportunities



CONVERSATION

What can we do to help your family worship together on Sunday morning?

How can I help your Sundays go smoother?

Is there anyway I can help you when you arrive at church?

Buddy Bags

- Sensory Bag
- Friendship opportunities
- Inclusion



Lessonpix.com

A visual schedule shows activities in order using pictures or simple words. It helps reduce anxiety by making expectations clear and predictable. Visual schedules support independence and make transitions easier throughout the service



Duration Tracker

STAR CHART

A start chart can be used as a form of "duration mapping". It can help count down time for children to help them prepare for a transition. This can be used instead of a timer, because it gives you more flexibility as to when to end the activity. Once you use this over and over, children will start to understand it. Here's an example: You are at a playground and leaving is usually difficult. A little bit after you get there, place one star on the strip and say, "there's one star, four more and then car". Continue to do this based on the amount of time you will be there. You can also base it on how your child is doing. If you sense that they are getting tired or worn out, you can place the stars on the strip faster so you can leave on a positive note, before a meltdown occurs.





- Calm Environment
- Visual Schedule
- Designated Areas

Ministry Opportunities



Usher



Greeter



Security

Outreach Opportunities

Sensory Friendly Egg Hunt

Church Networking Meetings

Parent Support Group



Diverse Ability Basketball Game

Respite Night

Sensory Friendly VBS

Night to Shine

What Is Your Next Step of Faith?



COMMUNICATE WITH GOD

LABORERS
LOCATIONS
LEADERSHIP
FAMILIES

CONNECT WITH OTHERS

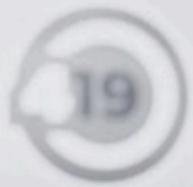
JONI AND FRIENDS
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MASTERPIECE ALLIANCE

CREATE OPPORTUNITIES

CONVERSATIONS
BUDDY BAGS
CLASSROOM
MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

1 CHRONICLES 28:20

“AND DAVID SAID TO SOLOMON HIS SON, BE
STRONG AND OF GOOD COURAGE, AND DO IT:
FEAR NOT, NOR BE DISMAYED: FOR THE LORD
GOD, EVEN MY GOD, WILL BE WITH THEE; HE WILL
NOT FAIL THEE, NOR FORSAKE THEE, UNTIL THOU
HAST FINISHED ALL THE WORK FOR THE SERVICE
OF THE HOUSE OF THE LORD.”



SAVE THE DATE



SPECIAL EDUCATION SUMMIT

June 25-26, 2026
Hickory, North Carolina





Homework

GOOGLE

DRIVE

laurenhickmatn@gmail.com

