



Beginning and Strengthening Inclusive Ministries and Congregations

- Start with one or both of these two: ***That All May Worship*** and the “*Journey of a Congregation.*” www.aapd.com. (Individual copies: \$15 from “The Boggs Center” Quantities from Ginny Thornburg at www.aapd.org. and/or ***Including People with Disabilities in Faith Communities: A Guide for Providers, Families, and Congregations.*** By Erik Carter. Paul Brookes Publishing. www.brookespublishing.com
- Start with 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 many facets of congregational life.
- Find out what your faith group is already doing and connect with others who are involved.
- Go to the “Faith Based Projects” section of The Boggs Center website for resource lists and ideas, http://rwjms.umdj.edu/boggscenter/projects/faith_based.html. Use ***Dimensions of Faith***, the 230 pp. online resource guide, for specific resources from many different organizations sorted by area of ministry.

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

If Jewish, see the Jewish Inclusion Manual, JFCS, Minneapolis. www.jfcsmpls.org/pdf%20new/inclusionguide.pdf

If Muslim, go to Islamic Society of North America, <http://www.isna.net/Leadership/pages/WHERE-DO-WE-GO-FROM-HERE.aspx> and/or info@equallyable.org.

Interfaith: The AAIDD Religion and Spirituality Division is an interfaith network within this international professional organization; www.aaiddreigion.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*** (30 min, Program Development Associates), ***Believing, Belonging, Becoming*** (11 min. 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, with its ten minute “extra,” “***Making Room in G-d’s House.***” and finally, ***A Place for All: Faith and Community for Persons with Disabilities.***” (60 min. documentary. 2009) <http://www.divacomunications.com/aplace>.

Books and Resources. See Dimensions of Faith, above, and the list on the back of this page.

Networks:

In a number of states, there are regional or statewide networks of people involved in this area. Also check for national resources or offices within your faith group. (Listing in *Dimensions of Faith*.)

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. Email: bill.gaventa@umdj.edu or 732-235-9204.

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