Leader 1: You have blessed me in so many ways
Leader 2: Thank you for my eyes
Group: So that I might see your love in others
Leader 1: Thank you for my ears
Group: So that I might know Your word
Leader 2: Thank you for my mind
Group: So that I might understand what you desire for my life
Leader 1: Thank you for my arms and legs
Group: So that I might use my muscles to work for you
Leader 2: Thank you for my heart
Group: So that I can feel your love and share it with others.
All: I am grateful for my life. Amen

~~ Julie Foster
Director, We Are Able workcamp

Disabilities Awareness Month
March 2011
Inspired by thoughts that came during a joyous Christmas celebration for participants, staff and board members of Lighthouse Vocational Services, an Anabaptist-founded sheltered workshop in New Holland, PA.

One: As we gather for worship, we gather in joy
All: For in our infirmity, we find God is our strength.

One: As we gather for worship, we are comforted
All: That God comes to us at the point of our need.

One: As we gather for worship, we are assured
All: That God comes to ordinary people with extraordinary Good News.

One: As we gather for worship we call upon God’s name
All: Trusting that God will be revealed this hour.

One: As we gather for worship, we seek the Good News
All: Believing in the Gospel of Christ and trusting in His way for Abundant life.

Completed New Years Day, January 1, 2011
David S. Young, Board Member
Lighthouse Vocational Services

Disabilities Awareness Month
March 2011
Leader: Shout to the Lord, all the earth!

All: We raise our voices in joyful praise!

Voice one: What about the shout coming from my autistic child – will you seek to silence our worship?

Leader: Worship the Lord in the beauty of Holiness. Come into God’s presence with joyful singing!

All: We raise our voices in joyful praise!

Voice two: I was asked to leave the choir. I am hard of hearing, but I like to sing. What about my voice? Doesn’t God want my voice?

Leader: Know that the Lord is God! It is he who has made us! We are his people and the sheep of his pasture!

All: We raise our voices in joyful praise!

Voice three: My family was asked not to come to church anymore. Our severely retarded child was a hindrance to worship. Lord, aren’t we your sheep too? May we enter into your presence?

Leader: Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise!

All: We raise our voices in joyful praise.

Voice four: I can’t get into the sanctuary. My legs do not work and the church building does not accommodate my wheelchair.

Leader: The Lord is good! God’s love endures forever!

All: God’s love is for all of us! Let us tear down the barriers and open our hearts and minds to God! Amen.

~~ Cindy Barnum-Steggerda
La Porte Church of the Brethren
St. John’s United Church of Christ

Disabilities Awareness Month
March 2011
LITANY

In the Midst of Challenges

One: When I need protection and guidance and seek deep, abiding rest, I affirm
All: The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures

One: When I feel anxious and depleted I am comforted to know that
All: He leads me beside still waters He restores my soul

One: When the direction seems unclear and I am afraid, I seek God’s way and declare that
All: He leads me in right paths for his name’s sake

One: When my needs seem overwhelming and I might feel afraid, in faith I find strength to say
All: Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil;

One: When I feel lost and vulnerable I believe that you will show a sure path
All: For You are with me, your rod and your staff—They comfort me.

One: When some underestimate me and I feel left out and misunderstood, I need you to heal my hurts; I thank you for your blessings.

Disabilities Awareness Month

March 2011
All: You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies, You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows

One: Rather than be resentful or ungrateful, I discover so many blessings that in faith I proclaim

All: Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All the days of my life

One: In faith I find that my life is full of God's love; in Christ I gain perspective and affirm. All: And I shall dwell in the house of the Lord My whole life long.

~~ David S. Young
Pastor and author

Disabilities Awareness Month
March 2011
We are able! I am able!

- I see that all persons are sons and daughters of God.
- I see that we are all different in some way, and I ask that God's love live in me and cast out my fear of others who are different from me.
- I will look for what I have in common with others of all abilities.
- I enjoy life – help me to share my joy with others as we share the freedom to enjoy life's opportunities together.
- I am able! Help me to share my gifts, abilities and strengths with others.
- I will give thanks for God's faithfulness in the midst of our common humanity, trusting in the Lord all the days of my life.

~ Adapted from an affirmation by Nancy Sollenberger Heisman, former member of the Church of the Brethren General Board; adapted by Heddie Sumner