



"And when they could not bring [the paralyzed man] to Jesus because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him..." —Mark 2:3-4 (paraphrased)

## PRAYERS

### INVOCATION

Most gracious and loving God, we come into your Holy presence with shouts of glad praise. In this hour of worship help us embrace the many voices through which you speak. Help us hear the joy you hear in the shouts of your child with autism, your son with a hearing impairment, your daughter with a developmental disability, your child with a visual impairment, your son with a physical challenge. We praise you O God and thank you for the many voices you have given us. Amen.

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

Lord, give me the courage and compassion to walk in the footsteps of those who struggle with depression, mental confusion, fears and anxiety. But also give me the hope to praise you, celebrate your love for all of us, and share the joy of faith. Amen.

~~ John Wenger  
Andersonville (IN) Church of the Brethren

Our gracious God, we come together as a diverse people with differing abilities. We are sometimes reluctant to share our desires to help with the ministry of your Word. We think that others can do this better than us. Help us to recognize that we all have special gifts. We are able! Give us strength to share our talents and gifts in your name. We are all in need of You. We are all Your children. We are thankful for Your love and opportunities. We praise You and thank You for the gifts You have given each one here. We are able through You! Accept our worship as an offering of praise. In Christ's gracious name we pray, Amen.

~~ Heddie Sumner  
Midland Church of the Brethren  
Member, Disabilities Ministry Group

## Disabilities Awareness Month

March 2011

Lord, grant me the wisdom to see the good in each person I meet. Grant me the empathy to understand their life situation and respect them enough to extend loving support, while sharing God's love with dignity. Allow me, Lord, to recognize opportunities to stand with others, friend to friend. Amen.

~~ John Wenger  
Andersonville (IN) Church of the Brethren

## CONFESSION

Loving God, we come to you in prayer with all of our limitations. We confess that we often try to mask our challenges from those around us. We pretend that we are whole to mask the brokenness in our lives. Where there can be healing, we ask that you help restore us. Where healing is not possible, we ask that you give us acceptance of our limitations and the strength to forge on. Help us to be patient with ourselves and tolerant of others. Give us the wisdom to not focus our attention on our limitations as humans, but on our giftedness as your unique children. Help us to recognize the giftedness of others, even when they struggle to see the good in themselves. Shift our mindset from what we are not, to what we are and are yet to be. Move us forward together as a community for your glory and our neighbors' good. Amen

~~ Benjamin Walters, Pastor  
Elizabethtown (PA) Church of the Brethren

## THANKS

Dear Heavenly Father, thank you for making each of us unique, created in every vast facet of your image. Thank you for all of the things we can learn from each other, our similarities and our differences. Allow us to see the special talents in everyone around us, especially those hidden behind behaviors we don't understand or diagnoses which make us apprehensive. Help us to move beyond stereotypes and preconceived notions to nurture the true spirit of all in our midst. Provide us with the resources needed to discover how we can each give back to you and our community, in our own creative and extraordinary ways. Amen.

~~ Dawn ME Artwick, MT-BC  
Lakeshore Music Therapy Services  
Lansing Church of the Brethren, Lansing, MI

Dear God, thank you for this day and all of the challenges that come with it. I am so blessed that you have provided me with the ability to handle those challenges. Open the eyes of my heart so I can see You and open my mind to hear and understand Your message. I am so grateful that You are a loving, forgiving, and understanding God. You have done so much for me. Please continue to bless me so that I might be a blessing to others. This is my prayer. Amen.

~~ Julie Foster  
Director, We Are Able workcamp

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