



Connections

The Newsletter of Bridge Disability Ministries

Spring, 2011

Included in the Body of Christ

By Linda Martin

On Sunday, February 27th at 10:30am St. Andrew Presbyterian Church in Renton welcomed the people we serve into the heart of their church for an inclusive worship service and communion meal. Intermingled with the congregants throughout the sanctuary people who live with a wide variety of people with intellectual disabilities, physical disabilities and mental health issues sat together at brightly colored tables, wheelchairs and walkers alongside folding chairs. A series of activities and elements of the worship service were centered around the meal we shared. People sang, prayed and broke bread together during this lively and engaging time of fellowship. It was a truly inspiring experience to be present during this transformational event, and we Bridge staffers who were there really felt the spirit of Christian sharing in that room.



Over the past year we have had several congregations experiment with inclusive worship services in various formats for Sunday Celebrations. Last June 13th, Emmanuel Episcopal Church on Mercer Island welcomed the people we serve, transforming their evening worship service into a Sunday Evening Celebration in their fellowship hall. On September 26th, Calvin Presbyterian Church in Shoreline hosted an inclusive morning worship service in their sanctuary followed by a luncheon in their fellowship hall. And on January 9th, Holy Spirit Lutheran Church in Kirkland hosted an inclusive morning worship and communion in their sanctuary followed by brunch in their fellowship hall.

This series of events has helped bring us ever closer to our ideal – true inclusion in the Body of Christ that is the Church. To these churches and to all the churches who host our Sunday Celebrations and other events, we wish to express our gratitude on behalf of the people we serve for including **ALL** parts of the Body of Christ within your congregations.

“Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.” 1 Corinthians 12:27

A Longing Fulfilled

By Gerry Barney, Mobility Center

Her face showed palpable disappointment. She realized the tilt-in-space wheel chair her husband's physical therapist had asked Bridge Mobility Center to reserve, would not fit their needs. They needed a chair portable enough to fit their trunk, recline up to 180 degrees, provide support for his shoulders and head, and elevate his feet. The picture of her crestfallen face stayed with me, which I take to be God's work, resulting in promptings to make follow up calls with questions about the different types of chairs. A reclining chair with a rigid back and head rest was too cumbersome to transport and lacked adequate shoulder and head support. They needed an extra high back that would still fit in a trunk. Thanks to an earlier donation of a unique chair, we finally hit on a solution. In fact she had recently located the same style chair on the internet, but it was far beyond their means. The chair we identified was the very thing they thought was beyond their reach.

Her husband is now freed from the isolation of his fixed position in the corner of their dining room. He has mobility to the kitchen to be with her as she prepares their meals as well as other rooms to be with her or company. More frequent trips outside the home and for longer periods of time are also possible. This is just what Bridge Disability Ministries' Mobility Center is about - made possible by donations of durable medical equipment, hundreds of volunteer hours and generous donations of funds to cover the costs of facilities and staff. Now the picture I carry with me is one of two faces brightened with new possibilities.

Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a longing fulfilled is a tree of life (Prov. 13:12).



God's Abundant Grace

By Dan Coppin, Board President

With a humble heart (and a certain sense of trepidation), I began my term as President of Bridge's Board of Directors in January. The trepidation came from following in the footsteps of Ron Birum, our outgoing President, who has served Bridge so faithfully and wisely for many years. My deepest thanks to Ron for his generous contributions of time and talents to Bridge. Recently I was reviewing Bridge Ministries 2010 Annual Report and I was struck anew by the many reminders of God's abundant grace and blessings on our ministries. Here are just a few examples:

- New churches are taking up our work to collaborate in building relationships and inclusion.
- Donations of mobility equipment, valued at over \$600,000, given free to those in need is growing.
- For the first time, we anticipate expanding our guardianship ministry to serve new clients.
- A host of new volunteers have participated in our ministries in a variety of supportive ways.

In 2011 we will face new challenges, most notably the impact that State budget cuts will have on the many vulnerable people we serve. I am confident that God's grace and blessings will continue to be apparent in all that we do.

Grace and peace be yours in abundance. 1 Peter 1:2

Our Mission

Because Bridge Disability Ministries honors the God-given dignity of persons with disabilities, we build relationships to alleviate isolation and enrich our churches and communities.

Do Things Look Different?



Mark Your Calendar

In an effort to be faithful stewards of your gifts, ***we are expanding our use of e-mail correspondence and our website*** as alternative ways to stay in touch with you.

If you would like to support our efforts to save time and mailing costs and still keep up on how your gifts are making a difference in the community, ***we invite you to e-mail us at bridge@bridgemin.org*** to sign up to receive our newsletter electronically.

Our 2010 Annual Report and past newsletters are also available via e-mail and on our website.

June 23 is GiveBig Day!

Be part of one of the largest days of inspired giving in King County history!

If, between the hours of 7am - midnight on June 23rd, you ***visit the Seattle Foundation's Giving Center*** (www.seattlefoundation.org/givingcenter) and make a donation to Bridge Disability Ministries, ***your donation will be matched proportionally*** by the Foundation's GiveBig Sponsors.

Mark your calendars now and don't miss this incredible opportunity to stretch your gifts in support of Bridge Disability Ministries!

Phone/TDD (425) 885-1006, Mobility Ministry: (425) 885-1008 (hours M-Th, Noon - 4:30pm)

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Bridge Disability Ministries

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What We Do:

- Spiritual Care
- Guardianship
- Mobility Equipment
- Community Connections
- Volunteer Opportunities
- Friendship Circles