



# Faith & Disability Symposium

INVITE. INCLUDE. INSPIRE

October 13th, 2012 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 pm  
St. Peter's United Methodist Church

[Register Now](#)

## SPONSORED BY:

St. Peter's United Methodist Church

Katy Autism Support

Knights of Columbus Council 12955

Grace Fellowship United Methodist Church

Houston's First Baptist Church

## Schedule of Events

8:30 am – 9:30 am	Registration
9:00 am – 9:10 am	Opening Remarks – Rev. Lorna Bradley, St. Peter's UMC
9:10 am – 10:10 am	Key Note Speaker – Arland Nichols, National Director HLI America
10:10 am – 10:30 am	Break/Vendor Tables
10:30 am – 11:30 am	Breakout Session I
11:30 am – 12:30 pm	Lunch
12:30 pm – 1:20 pm	Breakout Session II
1:20 pm – 1:30 pm	Break/Vendor Tables
1:30 pm – 2:20 pm	Breakout Session III
2:20 pm – 2:30 pm	Break/Vendor Tables
2:30 pm – 3:00 pm	Closing Remarks – Rev. Lorna Bradley, St. Peter's UMC

## Key Note Speaker



### THE DIGNITY OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

This presentation will explore a traditional understanding of the dignity of every person made in the image and likeness of God. Every human being, regardless of ability, is precious and worthy of love and ought to be respected and honored. Also discussed will be cultural and societal threats to persons with disabilities and how these threats can be overcome today. A robust appreciation of the dignity of every person is essential to ensure that the rights of persons with disabilities are protected and respected.

# Breakout Sessions

## SESSION I

### FROM THE PARKING LOT TO THE PLAYGROUND: WELCOMING FAMILIES WITH SPECIAL NEEDS TO YOUR CHURCH

**DENISE BRILEY**

**Special Needs Ministry Coordinator, First Baptist Houston**

Denise will offer practical information and solutions as your church discovers simple ways to include families and individuals with special needs into your congregations. You will discover ways you may have never considered to assimilate families, look them in the eye as you learn about their needs and concerns, and perhaps open your minds and hearts to fresh ministry opportunities. Denise's book, "**Feathers from Heaven**" will be available for purchase.



**DENISE BRILEY**

### BARRIERS TO SPIRITUAL GROWTH IN KIDS AND TEENS WITH MENTAL DISORDERS

**DR. STEPHEN GRCEVICH, M.D.**

**President, Key Ministry**

Families of children with disorders including ADHD, anxiety, Asperger's Disorder, attachment disorders, mood disorders and PTSD are significantly less likely to maintain an active involvement in a local church. In this presentation, Dr. Grcevich will discuss obstacles to spiritual maturity resulting from the functional impairment associated with common mental health disorders seen during childhood and adolescence and outline strategies for promoting inclusion at church and spiritual growth at home.



**DR. STEPHEN GRCEVICH, M.D.**

### GOT DIFFERENT LEARNERS? THEN TEACH DIFFERENTLY!

**MARY LYNN SMITH**

**Special Needs Ministry Coordinator, Tallowood Baptist Church**

Every person has been created by God in His image, and all of us need to hear of God's love and purposes for our lives. If we believe that all people deserve to hear the Good News in a way they can understand, we need to make the Good News accessible to all. Hear some practical pointers to help you teach and reach those who learn differently.

## SESSION II

### CREATED IN HIS IMAGE

**KAY MERKET**

**Director, Joni & Friends International Disability Center San Antonio**

Ms. Merket will discuss how different religions around the world view disabilities and what the Bible has to say about the disabled. Biblical responses to common misconceptions about disabilities will also be addressed. She will offer practical advice on outreach and evangelism to families affected by disability and speak about God's heart for evangelism to those affected by disability. This presentation will also cover practical ways to include families dealing with disabilities as well as building partnerships and networking to grow your ministry.



**JOHN BARONE, M.A.**

## FROM JUDGMENT TO CURIOSITY: CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT FROM A DEVELOPMENTAL PERSPECTIVE

**JOHN BARONE, M.A.**

**Director of Communications, The Monarch School**

In this workshop, we'll explore beliefs and methodology which will empower teachers to see and treat their students in a different way, taking on the role of ally rather than opponent, and dealing with "misbehavior" from a developmental perspective, coaching students toward taking more ownership of their learning and development. This will result in a more peaceful classroom, more learning, and teachers who go home feeling fulfilled rather than exhausted! Mr. Barone's book, "**A Place for All: Ministry for Youth with Special Needs**" will be available for purchase.



**CHARLENE KATRA**

## SEXUALITY, THE BIBLE AND INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

**CHARLENE KATRA**

**Associate Director, Office of Continuing Christian Education, Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston**

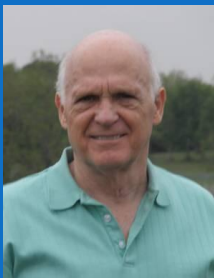
What do they have in common? Everything! Because God placed the capacity to love and form relationships in every human heart. Come gain knowledge of how Christian beliefs and practices nurture the healthy development of social and spiritual lives.

## INCLUDING KIDS AT CHURCH WHO BEHAVE AGGRESSIVELY

**DR. STEPHEN GRCEVICH, M.D.**

**President, Key Ministry**

Including children and youth prone to maladaptive aggression presents unique challenges for pastors, ministry leaders and volunteers, but is essential if many families of children with disabilities are to regularly attend church. In this presentation, Dr. Grcevich seeks to help churches include as many families as possible by establishing ministry environments that minimize risk factors contributing to aggressive behavior, offering strategies for church staff and volunteers who interact with kids at risk of behaving aggressively and identifying strategies for ministering to families when a child presents too great a risk of aggressive behavior to be safely included in church programming.



**LEON ALDERFER**

## SESSION III

### REACHING OUT TO FAMILIES DEALING WITH MENTAL ILLNESS

**LEON AND PAT ALDERFER**

**Facilitators, NAMI Support Groups**

The Alderfers will tell their own story about how God helped their family deal with mental illness and discuss how to recognize symptoms of mental illness. They will also provide an overview of resources available to the faith community to reach out to those in need and provide information about the support groups and free education classes offered by NAMI West Houston.



**PAT ALDERFER**

## PROVIDING RELIGIOUS EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN WITH COGNITIVE DISABILITIES

### DEACON DAN WRIGHT

Diocese of Austin

Deacon Dan Wright will discuss his personal experiences in providing religious education for elementary-aged children with autism and intellectual disability. The discussion will provide information on how start such a ministry in a congregation as well as the steps and challenges involved in teaching the congregation or parish to become more welcoming and tolerant of individuals with cognitive disabilities. Deacon Dan will also discuss and answer questions in regard to the practical and theological considerations involved in working with children with disabilities both as an educator in a public school and as clergy.



**DR. BRYANT SHAW, Ph.D.**

## ENHANCING ATTENTION IN PEOPLE WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS

### DR. BRYANT SHAW, Ph.D.

Director, The Monarch School Diagnostic Clinic

Through a review of research findings, personal anecdotes from master professional educators, and experiential “see-for-yourself” practices, ways to capture and hold the attention of people with Autism Spectrum Disorders will be explored. Live demonstration of various techniques and structures aimed at promoting attention will be featured, and participants will be afforded opportunities to share their observations and implement strategies learned in an atmosphere of fun and safe practice.

## Vendors

### [NAMI West Houston](#)

NAMI West Houston is a local affiliate of The National Alliance on Mental Illness, a grassroots non-profit organization dedicated to the welfare of individuals with mental illness and their families.

### [Texas Right to Life](#)

Texas Right to Life is the oldest, largest, and only statewide Pro-Life organization in Texas.

### [Lighthouse Learning & Resource](#)

Guiding families and educators to success in education and social relationships by offering services such as advocacy, social skills training and products to facilitate learning.

### [Joni & Friends International](#)

The Joni and Friends International Disability Center (IDC) serves as the administrative center for ministries which provide outreach to thousands of families affected by disability around the globe.

### [Future Horizons, Inc.](#)

World Leader in Books, DVDs, and Conferences on Autism and Asperger's Syndrome

### [Methodist Mission Home](#)

Through professional guidance and compassionate support, teens and young women facing unplanned pregnancy and families considering adoption make mutually beneficial decisions.

### [The Jagers Group, LLC](#)

Karen Jagers, M.S. Mental Health Counseling, Certified Parenting Coordinator, Family Mediation Services

### [Monarch School](#)

The Monarch School is dedicated to providing an innovative, therapeutic education for individuals with neurological differences

### [Camp Blessing Texas](#)

Camp Blessing Texas is a Christian camp for campers with disabilities and special needs, and their siblings.

### [Judy Blake, Author](#)

Single mother of two boys with autism, anxiety, obsessive-compulsive disorder and ADHD. She is the author of “Judy’s World: The World of Autism Through the Eyes of a Mother”.

**Plus other great resources!**